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ABSTRACT

Developed in response to the many recent national reports on school excellence in order to further improve education in Michigan, this document emphasizes equity as well as excellence. Section 1 outlines four key principles for making specific recommendations for educational improvement: improving learning, creating a learning environment, strengthening the teaching profession, and delivering educational services. In section II, recommendations to local school districts, the governor and legislature, and institutions of higher education are offered in a number of areas, from high school graduation requirements to professional development. The third section, on actions and directions projected for the State Board of Education, addresses many of the same issues, such as textbooks and instructional materials, computer technology, and accreditation. The next 2 sections provide, respectively, a summary of State Board of Education proposals concerning each of the four major principles for educational improvement, and an outline of 44 curriculum-related Michigan Department of Education activities in progress regarding national reports. Section VI describes previous actions by the State Board of Education regarding school improvement in 20 different areas, including middle school issues, basic skills, college entrance requirements, and career ladders for teachers/master teachers. The document concludes with a brief bibliography. (JBM)

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Better Education for Michigan Citizens:

A Blueprint for Action

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Better Education for Michigan Citizens:

A Blueprint for Action

The Michigan State Board of Education Plan

MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

EDUCATION 1

Foreword

The State Board of Education is pleased to present "Better Education for Michigan Citizens: A Blueprint for Action," a plan to improve education in Michigan which emphasizes equity as well as excellence.

As we improve our educational programs to achieve excellence, public policy and school curriculum must be designed to meet the needs of the vast numbers of children, youth and adults whose needs have not been met by existing programs and policies. The State Board of Education believes that excellence and equity must be the basis for developing educational reform.

In order for this plan to work, it will require the cooperation of educators, parents, citizens, students, local school boards, business, industry, and all levels of government. Educational excellence is a critical need for all citizens and for the future economic and cultural growth of our great state. Everyone has an important stake in making this action plan successful.

Special thanks are extended to Dr. Phillip E. Runkel, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and his staff for their support in developing this document.

Gumecindo Salas

Gumecindo Salas, Ph.D.
President
State Board of Education

Approved January 11, 1984

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Preface

The Michigan Constitution states:

> *Leadership and general supervision over all public education, including adult education and instructional programs in state institutions, except as to institutions of higher education granting baccalaureate degrees, is vested in a State Board of Education. It shall serve as the general planning and coordinating body for all public education, including higher education, and shall advise the Legislature as to the financial requirements in connection therewith.*
>
> —Article VIII, Section 3, Michigan Constitution.

Michigan has a rich history of education leadership. In the last decade and a half, state-level resources have been developed to assist schools in improving and programming for preschoolers through adults. Student expectations have been developed for the essential skills of communication, social studies, science, fine arts, health and physical education, and mathematics.

The Michigan Educational Assessment Program, which was one of the first statewide testing efforts in the nation, tests every 4th, 7th, and 10th grade student in reading and mathematics yearly, and tests students on a sampling basis in these other essential skills.

The State Board of Education has identified and evaluated numerous school improvement processes, classroom management techniques, programs in curricular areas, and professional development. New kindergarten-through-adult program standards, building-level improvement processes, and cooperative efforts with business and industry are being pilot-tested or implemented currently throughout the state.

Because of this history, the State Board of Education is in an unique position to guide Michigan toward further improving education for the future. "Blueprint" is a plan which the State Board of Education has developed to marshal the various improvements that have been highlighted in the many national reports on school excellence.

The plan was developed after the extensive review and discussion of these national reports and receiving comments from educators and citizens in Michigan. The content is based upon those reviews as well as the Michigan High School Commission study; recommendation from study committees in the areas of technology, mathematics and science, foreign language, and certification; a Department of Education statewide public opinion survey; research findings; the overall authority which the State Board has for dealing with specific issues; and the various options or alternatives available to the Board.

Although the various national reports have highlighted excellence, the State Board of Education's Blueprint for Action emphasizes equity as well as excellence. The State Board of Education recognizes the many societal factors that influence educational achievement and is compelled to stress that equity and educational opportunity must be major considerations in improving education.

I. Principles of Educational Improvement

The State Board of Education used four key principles in developing specific recommendations:

Improving Learning

The obvious should not be overlooked: The major responsibility of schools should be student learning. In the past decade alone the body of knowledge has exploded. Schools should concern themselves with a broad spectrum of knowledge, skills and attitudes which students need to reach their greatest potential to lead productive and satisfying lives.

Curriculum standards can and must be improved. Basic skills, new technology including computers, and proficiency in a second language are among the areas on which curriculum improvement should be focused. Performance standards should be set to ensure equity and excellence for all students.

There must be greater effort to ensure that areas of education which deserve special attention, receive it, including preschool education, middle schools, programs for special populations, vocational education, and articulation between high school and postsecondary institutions. But educators alone cannot strengthen curriculum standards. There must be a partnership of citizens, parents, teachers, administrators, and students working together for better education for Michigan citizens.

Creating a Learning Environment

Lofty educational aims are useless without a healthy learning atmosphere. Fourteen of the last fifteen Gallup Polls of the public's attitude toward public schools cite a lack of discipline as the primary problem facing our schools. Attention to issues of absences, school climate, discipline, homework, class size, and time on task will help create a better learning environment. Most of these efforts can be achieved in a coordinated way by the State Board of Education and local school boards at little or no new cost.

At the same time, praise is as necessary as criticism. Just as weaknesses should be tackled, exemplary schools and outstanding teachers in the state should be spotlighted through school excellence committees of students, parents, staff and citizens.

Strengthening the Profession

Michigan's teachers and administrators must be provided every opportunity to review and improve their professional skills and to acquire new knowledge if they are realistically expected to meet the growing demands of the information explosion, mandated educational programs, and rising expectations for schools. New policies should cover short-range issues of middle school teachers and administrators' certification, and loans and grants to prospective teachers; and longer-range issues relating to teacher preparation, career ladders for teachers, and improving teachers' salaries.

Delivering Educational Services

Public school enrollment has declined during the last decade. Of a total of 571 school districts, 175 have enrollments of less than 1,000. In fact, 40 of these districts have 150 or fewer students. A structure must be established so that all students in Michigan public schools can have access to a quality educational program.

Each of the recommendations within this "Blueprint" will fall into one of these four principles. In addition, each recommendation is grouped under one of three categories:

SECTION A. Recommendations to Local and Intermediate School Districts;
SECTION B. Recommendations to the Governor and Legislature; and
SECTION C. Recommendations to Institutions of Higher Education.

This approach is adopted for historical, legal, and practical reasons. Michigan's tradition and constitution give each of the three groups important roles to fulfill in education, and any education reform effort must be addressed to each and all of them. In addition, the "Blueprint" contains the policy actions that the State Board of Education will take on its own.

The "Blueprint" also is based on the assumption that time, planning, and money considerations will require that many of the recommendations be phased in over a period of four years. In keeping with Michigan's successful history of each segment of the educational enterprise carrying out its mandate within the role assigned to it, the State Board of Education is relying on the traditional goodwill and sound judgment of local school district boards to adopt and shape these recommendations to fit best their schools.

After the four-year period, the State Board will examine the status of the recommendations; and, if needed, will recommend further steps for local and intermediate boards and institutions. It may be necessary for the State Board of Education to request the Governor and Legislature to consider requiring additional steps.

II. Recommendations

SECTION A. RECOMMENDATIONS TO LOCAL AND INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Planning for School Improvement

No matter how good the ideas for improvement, a specific, logical plan is necessary to carry out changes in a school district. Some changes can be made fairly quickly; others require detailed evaluation by many people within the school system and community, including parents, students, business, industry, labor and other groups. There should be a regular review of a district's programs to anticipate problems and any needed changes.

RECOMMENDATION 1. The State Board of Education recommends that every local school board develop a long-range (3-5 years) School Improvement Plan using, as a base, the Standards of Quality Document being developed by the State Board of Education. Students, teachers, administrators, parents and other citizens should be involved in the development of the plan. The School Improvement Plan would include processes to:

- Develop Individual Learning Plans to identify, plan, and evaluate the educational needs of each student. No two students are identical. Each deserves a tailored program. The use of Individual Learning Plans is already in practice throughout Michigan for special education and adult education pupils.
- Ensure basic student academic and career competencies and encourage the maximum use of resources to help prepare all youth for career jobs through the use of Employability Development Plans.
- Review textbooks and other instructional material periodically, provide adequate resources for purchases, and establish policies for students' use of textbooks. Too many textbooks continue to be used long after they are outdated in terms of knowledge and awareness of today's ethnic, cultural and gender contributions. Michigan law requires that students be given free textbooks, but budget problems have led some schools to prohibit pupils from taking textbooks home.
- Assist all school staff in providing instruction and in setting higher expectations for students of special populations, such as the gifted and talented, compensatory education, minority groups, bilingual and migrant, and the handicapped. High expectations are a key component of student success.
- Ensure that students in adult education programs have equal access to instructional equipment, facilities, resources, and supplies. More and more adults need and want to complete or continue their education, especially to help them find new occupations or advancement in their current jobs.
- Describe the absenteeism situation in the district and make provisions for reducing absenteeism and in-school truancy. Both the National Commission on Excellence and Michigan Commission on High Schools have recommended that local school district boards adopt attendance policies with clear incentives and sanctions to reduce time lost.
- Reduce dropouts. The State Board of Education will adopt a model policy on student absences for consideration by local district boards and develop a plan to help districts lower the dropout rate and improve school attendance.

- Develop alternative programs for disruptive students and develop procedures to cooperate with community agencies to help reduce and prevent discipline problems.
- Use classroom management techniques to support positive learning environments, and adoption of a code of student conduct, including a process for informing and helping parents and students understand the code of conduct. Both the Michigan and National Commissions have recommended that codes be set which are fair, explicit, and are enforced consistently as one way to increase productive learning time.
- Adopt a policy on homework, including how it is assigned, monitored, made meaningful, graded, and returned to students. The policy should deal with making textbooks available to all students for homework and should provide for a learning environment at school for students to receive help and complete their homework. Sixty-nine percent of the Michigan public favored an increase in the amount of high school homework.
- Increase the quantity and effective use of instructional time available to students.
- Assess and monitor how time is allocated and used within the classroom and the school. The assessment should be based on the State Board of Education's Standards of Quality document.
- Review class size as related to current research and establish class sizes which would allow for the nature and degree of special student needs within the regular classroom (disadvantaged, bilingual, handicapped, gifted, etc.).
- Establish preprimary education programs and support the availability of programs to all 3-5 year olds.
- Review library and media facilities available to students to provide the resources to aid learning.

High School Graduation Requirements

Michigan has had a long, accepted tradition of local control over school programs and has instituted few state requirements for high school graduation. Each local district should continue to have jurisdiction over its curriculum, but it seems clear now that the time has come to ensure that every student, no matter in which district he or she lives, has an equal chance to learn the demanding skills necessary for today's and tomorrow's world. Surveys of both the Michigan public and of Michigan high school principals show strong support for several graduation requirements.

RECOMMENDATION 2. The State Board of Education recommends to local boards of education that they require all students to complete:

- Four years of communication skills, including reading, grammar, literature, writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking. Of the Michigan public surveyed, 83 percent favored requiring four years of high school English.
- Two years of mathematics including at least one course covering algebraic concepts. In spite of recent increases in mathematics and computer-science enrollments, half of all high school graduates have taken no mathematics or science beyond the 10th grade.
- Two years of science, including both biological and physical science.
- Three years of social studies, including government, history, economics, cultural and ethnic studies, geography, law-related studies, and critical thinking.
- Two years or more in one or a combination of the following areas: (1) foreign language, (2) fine or performing arts, or (3) vocational education or practical arts.
- One year of health and/or physical education.

- One-half year of "hands-on" computer education. Although almost no computer courses are required for graduation, 28 percent of Michigan students take a course, and 86 percent of the Michigan public surveyed favored requiring a course in computer science/literacy.

RECOMMENDATION 3. The State Board of Education recommends to local school boards that students who plan to go to a four-year college or university be encouraged to study the following:

- One additional year of mathematics, making a total of three years, including algebra, geometry, advanced algebra, and trigonometry;
- One additional year of science, making a total of three years, including biology, chemistry, and physics; and
- At least two years of a foreign language.

RECOMMENDATION 4. The State Borad of Education recommends that local school boards develop alternative programs with a strong support service component (counselors, social workers, psychologists, and attendance personnel) to address the different levels of student achievement and personal development. The support service component should include career education and a process for developing employability skills.

RECOMMENDATION 5. The State Board of Education recommends that students be provided a complete list of course offerings necessary for entry into various occupations.

Performance Standards

Evaluations should be reliable indicators of a student's readiness for further study, not simply automatically stamped passports to higher levels. The grading process also should pinpoint the need for remedial work. At the beginning of schooling, parents should be informed of the performance standards that the school district has established for their children. These standards should be clearly defined so that there will be an understanding by parents, students, and teachers of the performance expectations. The Michigan Commission on High Schools' survey found that 77 percent of the schools reported having no minimum competency-testing program which students are required to pass to move to another grade or to graduate, and the Michigan public opinion survey showed 97 percent of the public favored requiring students to pass reading and mathematics tests in order to graduate.

RECOMMENDATION 6. The State Board of Education recommends that local school districts establish written student performance standards for use in parent reporting and as promotion and graduation criteria. Alternative support programs should be available for students who are unable to meet the standards.

Instructional Time

Common sense suggests, and major research clearly indicates, that the more time spent on an academic task, the higher the likelihood of success. State law now requires school districts to provide at least 180 days with 900 hours of classroom instruction, but many educators recall that 200 days of instruction was more common 20 years ago. According to the National Commission on Excellence, in other industrialized countries it is not unusual for academic high school students to spend 9 hours a day at school, 220 days per year. In the United States, by contrast, the typical school day is six hours and the school year is 180 days.

RECOMMENDATION 7. The State Board of Education recommends that every school district:

- Operate senior high schools with a class day comprised of a minimum of six classes of 50 minutes each. Forty-five percent of the Michigan public surveyed favored a seven-hour day.
- Operate middle schools and junior high schools a six-clock-hour instructional day.
- Provide a school year of 200 days, at least 190 days of which should be for instruction. Ten days should be scheduled for professional development and recordkeeping. No more than five days should be deducted without makeup time because of severe weather ("snow days"). This recommendation could be phased in over a four-year period. (The State Board will recommend that the Governor and Legislature adopt legislation to require these changes in the school year and to increase state funding of the increased length.)
- Revise staff salaries in relation to the increased number of days of the school year.

Proficiency in a Second Language

RECOMMENDATION 8. The State Board of Education recommends that every school district:

- Develop foreign language programs at the elementary level to enable students to acquire or maintain knowledge and skills in language(s) other than English, consistent with personal experiences, interests, and talents.
- Develop foreign language program goals and objectives based on communications, global understanding, and foreign language proficiency.

Salaries

RECOMMENDATION 9. The State Board of Education recommends that every school district increase teachers' salaries to attract the brightest and best individuals into the teaching profession. The average teacher salary in Michigan in 1983 was $23,965, the sixth highest in the nation, just as the average family income in Michigan was third highest in the nation. In the Michigan poll, 70 percent favored employing teachers on an 11-month basis and 56 percent favored increasing teacher pay.

SECTION B.
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE

High School Graduation Requirements

The State Board of Education shall monitor the implementation of guidelines for high school graduation requirements; and, if the guidelines are not met by 1988, shall seek authority from the Governor and Legislature to mandate high school graduation requirements.

Instructional Time

RECOMMENDATION 1. For action now, the State Board of Education recommends to the Governor and the Legislature that local school districts be required to provide a school year of 200 days of which at least 190 days must be for instruction. Ten days should be scheduled for professional development and recordkeeping. No more than five days should be deducted because of severe weather. This recommendation could be phased in over a period of up to four years. It also is recommended that state funding be increased as a condition of lengthening the school year.

Special Programs

Care must be taken to ensure that special needs and special groups are not overlooked in the desire to provide every Michigan child with a sound grounding in basic skills. Excellence is sought, but not at the price of excluding either those who need help the most or those who have special talents.

RECOMMENDATION 2. The State Board of Education recommends that the Governor and Legislature appropriate funds for special programs for:

- Model gifted and talented programs based on State Board of Education-approved program plans. In the 1982 Michigan Education Poll, 42 percent of those surveyed felt not enough emphasis was being given toward programs for gifted and talented students.
- Preschool-age children having special needs (disadvantaged, bilingual, gifted). For some children, kindergarten is already too late to begin giving help. Various studies in Michigan and elsewhere indicate that preschool programs can improve children's achievements and reduce the need for their later assignment in special, more costly programs. (State law already requires intensive preschool services for handicapped children who need them.)
- The development of instructional programs in elementary schools which would be based on goals of communication, global understanding, and foreign-language proficiency. Children can begin learning a new language and respect for various cultures most easily at elementary ages.
- New technological equipment such as computers, and updating existing equipment in general and vocational programs.

Assessment of Performance

School districts will need technical help in developing the recommended performance standards for students. Similar assistance already is being given schools through the existing statewide Michigan Educational Assessment Program, which tests 4th-, 7th-, and 10th-grade pupils annually on reading and mathematics.

RECOMMENDATION 3. The State Board of Education recommends that the Governor and Legislature increase funds to the Educational Assessment Program to:

- Establish a state-level Assessment Service Center which would assist local school districts in the development and implementation of competency tests; and,
- Explore increasing the scope of the statewide assessment testing beyond reading and mathematics to a periodic, every-pupil assessment in other subjects, such as science and writing, to be determined by the State Board of Education.

Professional Development

It is foolhardy to expect students to achieve their best if their teachers are not themselves among the best and brightest. Yet, national and Michigan studies show the most promising young people seldom plan to enter teaching. Among those who do teach, many say that if they had to do it over, they would not choose teaching as a profession. Others are now required to teach in subjects or levels for which they have little specific training. More must be done to encourage the most able young people to consider teaching and to help those already in the field.

RECOMMENDATION 4. The State Board of Education recommends that the Governor and Legislature provide professional development funds to:

- Update and retrain teachers and administrators in science, mathematics, communication skills, and computer technology, and in the skills to assess the needs of adults in vocational education programs.
- Establish teacher training centers.
- Amend the School Code of 1976 to allow school districts to grant sabbatical leaves to teachers after five years of service rather than the seven years required under the present statutes. With the rapid increase in knowledge, many teachers now may need to consider taking time off after shorter periods of teaching to spend full time upgrading their skills and knowledge.

Structure

Large local school districts and intermediate school districts should serve as "regional learning centers" offering or coordinating advanced high school courses which other local districts do not provide on their own.

Some local and intermediate districts have neither the population nor funds to offer such programs. There also are still some primary districts which are too small to offer a high school program of any kind, much less a diversified one which serves the needs of all students.

RECOMMENDATION 5. The State Board of Education recommends that the Governor and Legislature enact legislation on the education structure to:

- Reorganize intermediate school districts, defining their future roles, and providing for stable and adequate funding.
- Provide incentives to local school districts that reorganize.
- Provide funds to construct or renovate, on a pilot basis, existing unused buildings for joint area vocational educational/academic facilities in areas of the state now devoid of comprehensive vocational education or comprehensive academic offerings.

Section C.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Michigan's 29 community colleges and 13 four-year state colleges and universities have vital roles in educational reform, both in directly educating students and in training the teachers who will carry out today's and tomorrow's education programs. The State Board of Education may make recommendations on college admission standards, but final authority rests with the governing board of each institution.

RECOMMENDATION 1. The State Board of Education recommends that colleges and universitites:

- Require two years of foreign language instruction or demonstrated proficiency for admission or graduation. (Students should be allowed to meet this requirement at either the high school or college level, in line with the recommendations elsewhere to local school boards.)
- Develop alternative programs with a strong service component (counselors, social workers, psychologists, and attendance personnel) to help students at different levels of achievement and personal development. It does little good to encourage minority students and others who may have special needs to seek a college education if they are not offered the help needed to stay in classes.
- Implement policies to ensure equal access to all services and programs without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, gender, marital status, or handicap.

RECOMMENDATION 2. The State Board of Education is directing the State Superintendent to work with colleges, universities and others to develop a plan of action to implement the recommendations of the Joint Task Force on Minorities, Females, and Handicappers in Michigan's Colleges and Universities.

RECOMMENDATION 3. The State Board of Education is directing the State Superintendent to develop a plan to improve coordination between and among educational programs at all levels.

III. State Board of Education Actions and Directions

The State Board of Education can take many steps through its policies and actions by directing the State Superintendent and the Department of Education staff to initiate changes and to support the recommendations to local school boards, the Governor and Legislature, and the colleges and universities.

High School Graduation Requirements

The State Board of Education shall strengthen high school graduation requirements by:

- Providing assistance to local school districts on the implementation of guidelines for high school graduation requirements.
- Gathering data from local school districts on the implementation of guidelines for high school graduation requirements and on enrollment in courses.
- Monitoring the implementation of high school graduation requirements to assure that there is flexibility within the framework of equity to allow all students to meet their maximum learning potential.
- Monitoring the implementation of guidelines for high school graduation requirements and enrollments; and, if the requirement is not met by 1988, seek authority from the Governor and the Legislature to mandate high school graduation requirements.

Textbook and Instructional Materials

The State Board of Education shall improve the quality of textbooks by:

- Establishing a textbook and instructional material center for training and evaluation.
- Expanding the textbook study process for periodic review of textbooks and instructional materials from a variety of subject areas. Practicing teachers and other experts should be used in the study process.
- Assisting local staffs in assessing instructional materials, including computer software, through regional training.
- Establishing a set of standards for science and laboratory equipment in elementary and secondary schools.
- Establishing standards for disposable toxic waste in elementary and secondary schools.
- Creating a clearinghouse for textbooks.
- Disseminating the findings of the reviews to textbook publishers for use in preparing future revisions of the textbooks.
- Facilitating communication between educators and textbook publishers during revision and prior to the publication of new textbooks.

Job Training

The State Board of Education shall foster job training by:

- Encouraging a partnership between schools, business, industry, and labor to develop programs to improve student skills and attitudes for career jobs and to locate resources to help stimulate such efforts.

Special Populations

The State Board of Education, recognizing special populations, shall:

- Create summer institutes to meet the needs of low achieving students with special emphasis on language and mathematics skills.
- Develop plans to eliminate illiteracy and underachievement for the youth and adults of Michigan geared to specific populations with high incidence of illiteracy.
- Adopt a policy to encourage local educational agencies to modify their curriculum and related policies to provide vocational education at earlier grades.
- Develop a total plan for the provision of area skills centers and programs in the entire state so that all students will have access to such facilities and programs.

Class Size

The State Board of Education shall:

- Direct the State Superintendent to make recommendations strengthening the State School Aid Act regarding pupil-teacher ratios.
- Direct the Superintendent to collect data to analyze pupil-teaching teacher ratios where classroom aides are available.

Teacher Preparation and Certification

The State Board of Education shall:

- Review recommendations from the Certification Code Study Commission regarding certification of teachers of the early adolescent in middle schools and certification of school administrators.
- Develop standards of quality for approval and periodic review of teacher education programs.
- Review the use of the continuing education units as partial fulfillment of requirements toward continuing certification.
- Encourage the upgrading of skills of currently-assigned middle school teachers in the subjects to which they are assigned and in the education of the early adolescent. Credit for these activities should be granted toward continuing certification.
- Direct the Certification Code Study Commission to recommend certification standards to the State Board of Education which require middle and high school teachers to be certified in a content area and to recommend standards for the certification of middle school teachers.
- Direct the Certification Code Study Commission to include certification of vocational education teachers in their study and recommendations.
- Direct the Certification Code Study Commission to address developmental parenting education as a requirement for all teachers.
- Support federal legislation to provide financial incentives for prospective teachers and direct the State Superintendent to work with the Michigan congressional delegation toward such legislation.
- Conduct a "comparable worth" study of all school employee classifications to help determine if school employees are being paid equitably for comparable work done in other professions and fields.

Professional Development

The State Board of Education shall:

- Establish an educational leadership academy which will grant continuing education units for future use in certification for both potential and practicing administrators.
- Revise current administrative rules to grant continuing education units toward certification through Board-approved professional development programs for both teachers and administrators.
- Encourage the upgrading of skills through professional development of currently-assigned middle school teachers in the content areas in which they are not prepared and in the education of the early adolescent.
- Establish a grant program to include competitive grants to enable teachers to design and carry out special professional projects.

Performance Standards

The State Board of Education shall:

- Formally recognize students and schools that demonstrate high achievement of state-assessed performance objectives or State Board-adopted performance standards.
- Adopt the policy that every local school district have written performance standards for use in reporting to parents, and as promotion and graduation criteria. Alternative support programs shall be available for students who are unable to meet the standards.

Computer Technology

The State Board of Education, based on the recommendations of the Technology Referent Group, shall:

- Acquire existing school district and/or intermediate/Regional Educational Media Centers (REMC) plans in order to develop and provide planning models for school district and intermediate/REMC use.
- Develop a statewide human resource bank composed of Department of Education, intermediate/REMC, university and local personnel to serve as resources to local districts, intermediate and REMC districts.
- Serve as a resource center for the use of Michigan educators to review and preview instructional software.
- Define minimum competencies for those students who choose employment in the field of technology for computer awareness, and for high school completion.
- Set standards for the certification of teachers of computer literacy and computer science, as well as standards for certification of all teachers in the use of computers.
- Provide access to training for teachers in classroom application of computer technology, as well as access to training for administrators in educational management applications.
- Evaluate the levels of computer literacy within the state.
- Recommend to the Governor and Legislature a proposal for funding computer software, training, and equipment.

Preprimary Education

The State Board of Education shall:

- Establish a parent-leadership program within the Michigan Department of Education.

- Establish standards, including screening procedures, for preprimary and parenting education to include curriculum guidelines.

Structure

The State Board of Education shall:

- Develop models for intermediate, and consortia of local school districts and/or intermediate school districts to operate cooperative academic programs.
- Direct the Superintendent to develop an intermediate school district reorganization plan including the mission and role of intermediate school districts.
- Develop a plan to maximize the educational opportunities for all students during the entire year. Every effort should be made to use existing school district facilities, which often are vacant during much of the year.
- Encourage local districts, individually or through cooperating groups of districts, and other educational agencies to include instruction of languages not commonly taught in the schools, but native to the countries with which the United States deals economically.
- Define and recommend to local school districts an equal, quality education program which each school district should make available to its students.
- Develop a plan for alternatives, either in the form of a consortium or intermediate school district magnet program, if equal, quality education programs cannot be supported by the local school district.

Model Policies

The State Board of Education shall develop model policies for recommendation to local school districts, as a part of the School Improvement Plan, including:

- Student absences.
- Homework.
- Dropout prevention.
- Textbook and material review.
- Discipline.

Accreditation

The State Board of Education shall develop a system, implementation plan, and timeline for accreditation of elementary and secondary schools.

Instructional Time

The State Board of Education shall enforce the 180 day, 900 hour provisions.

IV. Summary

In total, the State Board of Education proposes to *Improve Learning* through such steps as strengthening graduation requirements, strengthening preparation for going on to college, establishing written student performance standards, and lengthening the school day and school year.

To *Create a Better Learning Environment,* the State Board proposes having a comprehensive school-planning process to address issues of homework, discipline, attendance, and dropouts; and funding special programs for gifted and talented, and preschool.

To *Strengthen the Profession,* the State Board proposes increased emphasis on professional development, certification, and salaries.

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of *Delivering Educational Services,* the State Board proposes educational structures where school districts join together to provide unique programs.

Time is important in beginning to make these changes. The turn of the century seems distant, but children born in 1984 could be graduating from high school in the year 2000. The time is now, then, to adopt programs and improvements which will prepare Michigan's young people and adults for both today's challenges and those of the new century. This is the aim. If the plan's goals are reached, Michigan citizens of the year 2000 can look back on 1984 not as the mind-deadening time portrayed in the novel **1984**, but as a time when Michigan took an important step forward to nurture the education of all its citizens.

V. Activities in Progress Within the Michigan Department of Education Regarding National Reports

The following activities, within the Department, are related to curriculum:

ACTIVITY 1. Development of the School Improvement Plan of Action including Michigan Department of Education procedures and suggestions to local education agencies regarding long-range planning and professional development.

A committee is working on an overall Plan of Action for School Improvement in three areas: planning, professional development, and delivery of services. It will recommend policy to the State Board of Education in March, 1984.

ACTIVITY 2. Completion of the Michigan K-12 Program Standards of Quality field test by May, 1984, with recommendations for Board approval in June, 1984.

The Department's "K-12 Program Standards Project" is in its third year of operation. This is the year to field test the use of the proposed standards. The field test involves approximately 70 local school districts and over 200 local schools using the program standards to: 1) self-assess local school programs and operations, and 2) implement a process for school improvement for the purpose of improving student learning. The field test will be completed by the end of May, 1984. The Program Standards document will be revised as necessary based on the field test reports by the State Superintendent's committee, and submitted to the State Board for approval in July, 1984.

ACTIVITY 3. Implementation of Michigan's Adult Education Standards of Quality.

Since the Adult Education Standards were approved by the State Board of Education, they have been implemented at various levels in 135 districts—about one-half of the districts having adult education programs. Department staff has presented workshops at regional community educational associations to assist staff to implement the standards.

In the spring of 1984, districts will submit forms evaluating the status of their plans to implement the standards. Department staff will select two or three districts that have been successful and will ask that those districts assist others with the process.

ACTIVITY 4. The Foreign Language Education Position Paper of the State Board recommends that all four year colleges and universities in Michigan require two years of a foreign language for graduation.

Staff is widely disseminating the Foreign Language Position Paper. Five hundred copies of the Position Statement were disseminated at the State Conference on Foreign Languages in November, 1983.

ACTIVITY 5. Revision and distribution of subject area surveys in mathematics, science, and foreign language.

Revision of subject matter surveys will be done in two steps. A brief survey will be sent to all school districts to gather general information about the science, mathematics, and foreign language programs. This will be completed by or before June, 1984. In addition, specific information about science and mathematics programs will be collected from a random stratified sample of schools if a grant is received from the Council of State School Officers. This is targeted to be completed by June, 1984.

ACTIVITY 6. Completion of instructional support material to relate Essential Skills expectations to Life Role Competencies expectations.

This effort is in various stages of progress depending upon the subject area. Some of the content areas can provide a complete matrix of the relationship between curriculum materials, life role competencies, and performance objectives. The curriculum specialists are in the process of updating all content area materials and will be completed by June, 1985.

ACTIVITY 7. Promotion of Michigan Life Role Competencies as the student outcomes of high school education in Michigan.

The Michigan Life Role Competencies have been integrated with the performance objectives in health. In social studies, that process will be completed in June, 1984. Other essential skill areas will implement that process as the objectives are revised.

ACTIVITY 8. Development of performance objectives for computer literacy education.

Materials for the development of computer literacy objectives are being collected.

ACTIVITY 9. Continuation of the revision and development of support materials for the essential skill areas, based upon results of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program, and revised objectives.

These materials are in various stages, depending upon the subject area and the testing period.

ACTIVITY 10. Completion of the revision of the foreign language performance objectives.

This project will be initiated when the new position for a foreign language specialist has been filled.

ACTIVITY 11. Development of middle school certification.

The Certification Code Study Commission convened on December 15, 1983, and again on January 12-13, 1984, to prepare an interim report on the teaching of early adolescent (middle/junior high school) students. The report will include recommendations to the State Board of Education.

ACTIVITY 12. Continuation of the "Teacher of the Year" award.

Again this year, a teacher will be selected as "Michigan Teacher of the Year." That person will then be nominated to represent the country in the same capacity.

ACTIVITY 13. Implementation of high-achieving Michigan Educational Assessment Program for schools.

The Department of Education will continue to recognize "outstanding" and "improving" schools, based on Michigan Educational Assessment Program scores.

ACTIVITY 14. Continuation of Excellence in Secondary Schools Program.

For the second year, the Department of Education has participated in the federal program, Excellence in Secondary Schools. As many as nine high schools and nine middle/junior high schools will be identified for recognition. An award ceremony will take place in Michigan in March, 1984. The names of those schools will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education to compete nationwide.

VI. Previous Actions by The State Board of Education Regarding School Improvement

Curriculum and Performance Standards

The State Board of Education has approved minimal performance objectives in the Essential Skill Areas of art, career development, communications (reading, writing, listening and speaking), health, mathematics, music, physical education, science, social studies, and foreign language. The objectives serve as a basis for curriculum development and assessment testing.

The State Board of Education approved a document entitled "The Michigan Life Role Competencies for High School Education" in 1978.

The State Board has approved curricular guidelines in the following areas: consumer economics, multicultural education, global education, environmental education, sex education, and drug education.

The State Board of Education approved the survey by the High School Commission. A survey for mathematics, science, gifted and talented, and foreign language has been developed, but not distributed.

The State Board of Education approved the development and dissemination of support materials to assist local school districts in the improvement of curricular areas as defined in the Essential Skill Areas.

Assessment of Student Performance

The Michigan Educational Assessment Program tests 4th, 7th, and 10th grade students annually in the areas of reading and mathematics. Other areas, such as art, career development, health, music, education, science, and social studies are sample-tested on a periodic basis.

The State Board has approved essential skills and life role competencies which could be used as criteria for promotion and graduation.

High School Graduation Requirements

The State Board of Education has not previously recommended high school graduation requirements, although there is a suggested list in the Quality Standards document which has not been finally approved by the State Board.

Proficiency in a Second Language

The State Board of Education approved performance objectives for foreign language instruction in 1974.

The State Board of Education adopted a Position Paper and Policy Statement on Foreign Language Education in June of 1983.

Middle School Issues

The State Board approved the document entitled "Position Paper Concerning the Education of the Early Adolescent" in 1979 exclusive of Chapter VIII ("Recommended Revisions in 1973 Administrative Rules Governing the Certification of Michigan Teachers"). The Board approved the concept of the certification of middle school

teachers. As a result of this Board action, Chapter VIII was then sent for review to the Teacher Preparation and Certification Services Advisory Council.

The position paper, exclusive of Chapter VIII, but including a new Chapter VIII that reported on the results and recommendations of the seminar on the middle school, was distributed to all school districts.

Basic Skills

The State Board of Education approved a position paper on writing in 1980.

The State Board of Education approved the essential skills document in the areas of communication skills and mathematics.

The State Board of Education adopted, in 1980, a four-year Comprehensive State Plan for Kindergarten-Adult Basic Skills Improvement, which addresses special populations.

Textbooks and Instructional Materials

State law requires a biennial textbook study, but no funds have been appropriated for several years for this purpose. As a result, only social studies textbooks are examined.

The state law directs that all instructional materials shall be reviewed, including social studies.

There is an existing law which states that local officials are responsible for selecting educationally sound instructional materials which accurately and positively reflect our pluralistic society.

Programs for Special Populations

The following state legislation regarding compensatory education, bilingual education, gifted and talented education, and special education has been enacted:

- **Compensatory Education:** Article 3 of the State School Aid Act provides funding for supplementary services to educationally disadvantaged pupils in districts with concentrations of such pupils as determined by the Michigan Educational Assessment Program. The funding is used primarily for additional instructional staff who furnish supplementary instruction in reading and mathematics in grades Kindergarten-9. Section 48 of the State School Aid Act provides funding to assist school districts in meeting the costs of alternative instructional and support services for pupils with academic and social rehabilitative needs. These alternative programs are focused on pupils at the high school level.
- **Bilingual Education:** The School Code of 1976 requires that school districts which enroll 20 or more children of limited English-speaking ability in a language operate a bilingual instruction program for those children to provide sufficient level of English language proficiency to enable them to achieve success in the regular English-speaking classroom. Funds are provided under the State School Aid Act to support these programs. Bilingual programs are designed to ensure that no child's success in public schools is unduly inhibited because he or she is a child of limited English-speaking ability.
- **Gifted and Talented Education:** Section 47 of the State School Aid Act provides funding to support two program efforts for gifted and talented students. Part one allocates funds for 75% salary reimbursement for a consultant and up to $3,000 for program costs available to intermediate school districts. Part two provides money to support the State Board of Education's Summer Institutes for the Arts and Sciences. A two week residential program is held on a university campus for tenth and eleventh grade students.

- **Special Education:** Article 3 of the School Code of 1976 sets forth mandatory requirements for educational programs and services to handicapped persons, birth to 26 years of age. Substantial rules and regulations have been promulgated by the State Board of Education.

Vocational Education

The State Board of Education approved Minimum Vocational Performance Objectives in 1974.

The State Board of Education approved a document entitled "A Tentative Plan for the Development of Area Education Centers in Michigan" in 1970.

The State Board of Education annually approves a document entitled "The Annual and Long-Range State Plan for Vocational Education in Michigan."

The State Board of Education approves official designation of each area vocational center before it can be legally recognized as a center.

The State Board of Education approved curriculum guidelines for Consumer Education in 1976.

The State Board of Education approved Office for Civil Rights guidelines.

The State Board of Education approved certification rules.

Preprimary Education

In 1976, the State Board of Education adopted a publication entitled "Directions in Early Childhood Education, Part I."

In 1979, the State Board of Education adopted a publication entitled "Developmental Foundations for Preprimary Education in Michigan."

In 1983, the State Board of Education directed the Superintendent of Public Instruction to study the entire issue of preschool, developmental kindergartens and kindergarten programs in the state.

College Entrance Requirements

The State Board of Education adopted a Policy Statement on Equal Opportunity in Higher Education in July of 1967. The policy of the Board stated that admission policies of the higher education institutions must be so administered that the culturally deprived, the educationally handicapped, or the economically disadvantaged are not excluded from the opportunity to receive the education for which they have the aptitude and the latent ability. The policy also addressed the issue of teacher education and support staff at the higher education institutions.

The State Board of Education adopted a State Plan for Higher Education in June of 1969. The State Board has gone on record in favor of equality of access for all students to postsecondary education and in support of community colleges maintaining an "open door" policy for the admission of students.

The State Board of Education, in its position paper on foreign language education, recommended that schools, colleges and universities reinstate foreign language requirements for all graduates.

The Joint Task Force on Minorities, Females, and Handicappers in Michigan Colleges and Universities recommended:

- That secondary school counselors and teachers increase the number of minorities and handicappers enrolled in college preparatory curricula taking courses in mathematics, languages, natural science, and social science.
- That secondary school teachers and administrators, working in close collaboration with faculty from nearby colleges and universities, define those intellectual competencies that are crucial to effective performance in college and develop tests to measure such competencies.

Discipline

The State Board has approved the following documents for dissemination in Michigan schools:

- **A Recommended Guide to Students' Rights and Responsibilities in Michigan Schools,** First Edition, 1978; Second Edition, 1983; and
- **The Governor's Task Force on School Violence and Vandalism: Report and Recommendations.**

Instructional Time

The State Board of Education has taken a position on instructional time through the child accounting rules in the Michigan Administrative Code.

The School Code of 1976 requires a minimum number of hours and days of teacher-pupil contact in accordance with child accounting rules under Michigan Administrative Code.

These requirements vary from 144 days and 360 hours for preprimary students to 230 days and 1150 hours for severely impaired students, with the regular school requirements being 180 days and 900 hours.

Class Size

The State Board of Education, in 1970, adopted the Superintendent's recommendation to view reduction in class size as one means for improving the basic skills learning of educationally disadvantaged children at the primary and even the preschool level.

Leadership and Management

The State Board of Education has established a process for recognizing exemplary high schools and outstanding teachers.

Implementation Plan

The Superintendent of Public Instruction has recommended that local school districts establish school excellence committees.

The State Board of Education has authorized staff to field test the document entitled "K-12 Standards of Quality."

The State Board of Education has approved "Standards of Quality" for adult education programs.

Teachers' Salaries

The State Board of Education was an early supporter of legislation which extended to teachers, and other public employees, a voice in determining their working conditions through the collective bargaining process. Continued support for the collective bargaining process is expressed in the Board's 1967 policy statement.

The State Board of Education has participated in the National Teacher of the Year Program for four years and soon will be considering expanding the program so that more Michigan teachers may be recognized for meritorious performance.

Career Ladders for Teachers/Master Teachers

The State Board of Education approved, in March, 1983, the concepts contained in the paper entitled "A State System for Educational Personnel Development; A Continuum Model." The concept of master teachers, or career ladders for teachers, was not an explicit part of the Continuum Model; however, a career ladder/master teacher system, arrived at through the collective bargaining process, would be in harmony with the rationale which supports the Continuum Model.

Teacher Preparation and Certification

The Michigan State Board of Education adopted, in March of 1983, the concepts in the document entitled "A Proposed System for Education Personnel Development; A Continuum Model," which provides for major reform of teacher preparation and certification.

On August 10, 1983, the State Board of Eduction referred the Continuum Model to the Certification Code Study Commission.

Professional Development

In 1977, the State Board of Education approved a plan for Professional Staff Development in Michigan. That plan contained two major parts:

- An entitlement program to provide funds for local and intermediate school districts, under the aegis of a policy board with a majority of teachers, to assess staff development needs, develop programs, identify resources, and evaluate the activities. This has been funded since 1980 at an average of $2 million per year.
- A grant of $100,000 each to up to 25 Regional Teacher Centers to serve as resource links between the Department of Education and local professional development programs. This program was not funded.

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MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL LAW

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